



## Henderson Community College Title III

# Coaching for Student Success

## How Can We Help Students Succeed?

### Upcoming Professional Learning Opportunities:

- Outlook I and II
- WebCT: Assessment Tools
- Intro to Powerpoint
- Plagiarism in the Classroom
- Paperless Grading with Word
- Word Mail Merge
- "You Got Style": Using Learning Styles in Your Professional and Personal Lives
- Valencia Learning Conversations Conference
- Beginning Contribute

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*By Kim Conley, CIO and Title III Project Coordinator*— How can we help students succeed? For almost a year now I have been asking myself this question, and I must admit I have been a bit frustrated that eleven months after beginning the Title III project I still don't have the answer.

When I volunteered to take a leadership role in the Title III project, I had no idea what I was volunteering for. At the time it seemed like a way to be more involved in the real mission of the college – helping students succeed; a way to learn more about developmental education and a way to branch out a bit from the world of technology. I looked at it in terms of what I could bring to the project, what I could do to make it a success. Little did I realize how much it would change me and my perspective on my role here at HCC.

The past year has been a time of confusion, change, conflict and, thankfully, resolution. I have found that sometimes in order to make something successful you have to leave behind your baggage, get outside your comfort zone and look at the big picture instead of the immediate results.

I have had to ask myself what the purpose of the Title III grant is. Why are we here? I don't have all the answers. What I have found, through working with many dedicated people on campus in the past eleven months, is a place to start.

We are here to question the learning methods we have used in the past and the ones we are employing now. Are they working? Are the students learning? Do we have proof? We ask these questions not because we are inadequate or failing, but because we want to improve and be more successful. Each technique we experiment with is another step in helping our students to succeed. Each failure is another step towards success. We have many dedicated faculty and staff members who are anxious to explore these areas and find new and exciting ways to engage our students both in and

out of the classroom.

We are here to encourage our students, to get to know them better and become more involved in their lives. We are here to help them find their way through the land mines of the education process. How can we help them succeed? How can we alleviate their fears and confusion? How can we provide them with the tools they need to be successful not only in education, but in life? We are exploring these questions through the intrusive advising process and will hopefully find new ways to answer them. We are finding that it takes everyone in the institution to facilitate this process, that we are all important parts of the puzzle.

Finally, we are here to learn. We are here to learn not only how to be better educators, but how to be better people. These lessons don't always come from a classroom, but from our interactions with our colleagues, the community and most importantly our students. We have to face each day with the willingness to learn from others and the graciousness to learn from our mistakes. We meet each day with the eagerness to learn one more way to make it click for our students, to help them make the connections between learning and success.

The Title III grant affords us the opportunity to begin the journey to find out how to help our students succeed. It is giving us the chance to ask the questions and possibly even find the answers. It is the beginning of the process, not the end. It is the catalyst for change, not the panacea for all of our problems.

At this point in our Title III journey there are many unanswered questions; questions that we will all be exploring in the years to come. Will we find the answers? Maybe not, but I am confident that we will learn much in the process and that the success of our students will not be the only positive outcome from this journey.

## A Human Touch at the Western Regional Conference

**By Sharon Burton, English Professor**—Those who attended the Western Regional KCTCS Conference in Hopkinsville in early August had the unusual pleasure of listening to a speaker who reinforced his message through music. Speaking at the opening session of the conference, Sanford C. Shugart, President of Valencia Community College in Florida, deeply impressed many in the audience with his message and his medium, for his humanistic approach evidences itself in a range of ways.

President Sandy Shugart presented himself as a person rather than as an administrator. Certainly, he spoke of administrative problems, but his approach to those problems never left one in doubt that he sees people as individuals and hopes to be seen that way himself. His keynote address, interspersed as it was with his singing and guitar playing, provides a model for teachers and administrators. Are we more successful as facilitators when we present a more human aspect to our students? Shugart's approach shows that even a "lecture" can maintain the interest of an audience when the message is clearly presented and the speaker makes an effort to connect to the audience.

And the message President Shugart presented is an important one. He espouses a humanistic approach to education, an approach that encourages teachers, staff, and administrators to consider each student as an individual rather than as a number or a

problem. He practices his philosophy on a personal level by breaking the rules to help students who are caught up in circumstances they can't control, such as the student who lost her ability to finish out the semester when she lost her fiancé. Instead of merely citing the passed deadline for re-funds, he broke the rule to help this individual. His staff has been allowed to share this power. By setting up an emergency fund that any employee can use to help troubled students, he encourages every faculty and staff member to feel that each one can make a difference.

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As we continue to explore what it means to be a learning-centered institution, we should remember, of course, that each learner is an individual. But perhaps doing so will be easier if we remember that each of us can also respond as a person, not merely as a teacher or an administrator. Throughout my fourteen years with Henderson Community College, the stories I have enjoyed the most—and those that have made me proudest—are those from students who have been touched by the people who work here. Every one of those students was touched by an individual.

## I Can't Find the Time to Even Find Time to Attend Training!

**By Sarah Thomas, Learning Specialist**—In today's busy environment, little time is left for professional development activities, yet acquiring new skills remains an important goal. It seems that every day more is asked of us, but time remains a constant. Finding time to attend workshops and seminars is becoming increasingly scarce. What can be done?

Unfortunately (or maybe it is a fortunate thing) we can't add hours to the day, or days to the week. We can, however, make learning achievable at times that are convenient for you. This is becoming possible through the Digital Learning Lab in AD205. The Lab has been created for faculty and staff to have access to alternative teaching and technology strategies. It is a continuously changing environment where new technology and resources will be added to meet your needs so you can meet the diverse needs of your students.

How does this help with the time issue? The Lab is always open for your use at a time that is convenient for you. You have access to one-on-one assistance where I can help you learn new technologies and show you how to incorporate them into your classroom. Just contact me to let me know what I can help you with. With the resources available in the Lab I am beginning to develop interactive learning simulations that you can access at any time to learn new skills, rather than attending a workshop.

Currently, the Digital Learning Lab has these resources available:

- 12 computer stations plus an instructor station
- Projector and screen
- SMART whiteboard
- Video editing station with Camtasia screen recording software
- Studio MX (multimedia software) to create animations and interactive simulations
- Digital Camera & equipment
- Digital Video Camera & equipment

So far, the lab has been used by faculty and staff in these ways:

- Workshops and training
- Video taping and editing for an online class
- Departmental meeting where one faculty member shared a software program with the others
- Curriculum planning meeting where faculty could review documents on a large screen as a group

Technology is changing as we speak, and the Digital Learning Lab will be constantly improved with additions of new resources that will benefit you. We want to know what you are needing or would like to try so we can make it a priority to get you the resources to make it happen.

## Techniques for Learning

*By Doris Cherry, Activity Director and Academic Skills Coordinator*—Mary J. Poole, Education Specialist in The Learning Center at Madisonville Community College, presented “50 Ways to Learn Your Lessons” at the past KADE (Kentucky Association of Developmental Educators) Conference. The list she gave is as follows:

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|--|---|
| 1. Read out loud                           | 27. Reduce stress                                     |
| 2. Write end of chapter questions          | 28. Create a study space                              |
| 3. Keep regular study times                | 29. Review daily                                      |
| 4. Flash cards for terms                   | 30. Use a study buddy                                 |
| 5. Flash cards for concepts                | 31. Skim the text                                     |
| 6. Add pictures to work                    | 32. Read right after the lecture                      |
| 7. Rewrite notes in 24 hours               | 33. Use muscle memory                                 |
| 8. Type notes                              | 34. Visualize   |
| 9. Record Q & A on tape                    | 35. Touch objects                                     |
| 10. Recite                                 | 36. Use exaggerated expressions when reading out loud |
| 11. Talk and walk                          | 37. Annotate text                                     |
| 12. Share notes                            | 38. Cornell notes from text                           |
| 13. Use color                              | 39. Cornell notes from lecture                        |
| 14. Use shapes to impact memory            | 40. 2:1 study:class time                              |
| 15. Write jingles, rhymes, or songs        | 41. Attend study groups                               |
| 16. Write on flip charts                   | 42. Create visual mappings                            |
| 17. Write on a chalkboard                  | 43. Create comparison charts                          |
| 18. Create practice tests                  | 44. Create time lines                                 |
| 19. Use waiting time                       | 45. Create outlines                                   |
| 20. Use travel time                        | 46. Create “cheat sheets”                             |
| 21. Create words for lists to remember     | 47. Create PowerPoint presentations                   |
| 22. Create nonsensical sentences for lists | 48. Attend different sections of the same class       |
| 23. Make a 5-day study plan                | 49. Create hierarchies                                |
| 24. Practice                               | 50. Skim text before lecture                          |
| 25. Utilize technology                     |   |
| 26. Attend all classes                     |   |

Naturally, her list plays right into the idea of learning styles; that is, learners are going to have preferences for different techniques by which to learn material. Although we should encourage the use of students’ strengths, we should also provide opportunities for students to try a variety of techniques. I like students to have lots of tools in their toolkits.

I would like to comment on several of the methods listed. For instance, rewriting notes as mentioned in number 7 is different than recopying notes. Rewriting suggests reorganization; whereas, recopying is generally mechanical in nature. Let’s look at numbers 31, 32, and 50. Skim the text [assignment before reading]. Then I recommend reading the assignment before the lecture, which enables one to be a better listener and note-taker. It allows the student to reinforce what he already has read and to question what may be in conflict with his understanding of the material. Reading in advance of class also helps the student practice becoming a more independent and responsible reader, thinker. He begins to see the relationship of the material, reflects, questions, and rereads as necessary. Of course, if on occasion he runs out of time to read the text prior to class, then he should at least skim the assignment. Even if having read, it is a good idea to skim prior to class to refresh the mind. After the lecture, the student should skim the text and review the notes within 24 hours. When reading an assignment, though, I think of study reading, not merely seeing words and getting to the end of the chapter as some students consider reading to be. This, perhaps, is another discussion.

Keep Mary J. Poole’s list handy. You may decide to incorporate more of these techniques in the classroom or to suggest on an individual basis.

# Attitudes that Promote and Those That Limit Learning

An excerpt from *Good Classroom Teaching for All Kinds of Learners* ([www.hellofriend.org/teaching/good\\_classroom](http://www.hellofriend.org/teaching/good_classroom)).

## Attitudes that Limit Learning For All Kinds of Learners

- Innate intelligence is probably the best predictor of student learning and achievement in schools.
- Intelligence is unevenly distributed on a bell curve. A few can expect to achieve at a high level, most will be average, and some will fail.
- “Normal” means being able to learn the same things that other kids of the same age learn, in the same way, at the same time, at the same rate.
- There is usually one correct answer and one best way of finding it.
- Students will have an opportunity to show what they know on the test.
- Faster is better. Doing things faster means you are smarter.
- Mistakes mean you haven’t learned or studied carefully enough.
- The best students are independent. They don’t need or ask for assistance. Help makes you dependent.
- There are some things that individual students just can’t learn. Some students just don’t have what it takes.
- Student’s who don’t succeed in school need a dose of the hard reality that awaits them in the real world.
- Students who do poorly in school would be more successful if they were more motivated.
- It’s not fair to make accommodations just for some students.
- Teachers teach information. Good students master the subject matter.

## Attitudes That Promote Learning For All Kinds of Learners

- Hard work and effective teaching are the primary predictors of student achievement.
- All students can become capable, achieve at a high level, and improve in an area of weakness.
- There are many different ways to learn. The world is a better place because we are not all the same. There are advantages to thinking in different ways.
- There are many ways to succeed. There can be successful elements in wrong answers and unsuccessful work.
- Students will have many opportunities and ways to show what they have learned.
- It is not how quickly but how well you learn that counts. Speed can improve with practice.
- Mistakes are natural steps in learning and can point the way to success.
- Good students are interdependent. They ask for and give help. They look for detailed feedback on their work.
- Students can improve, even in their areas of weakness. Teachers don’t give up on individual students.
- Sarcasm, shame, and humiliation are inappropriate ways of addressing the needs of unsuccessful or struggling learners.
- Students who do poorly in school would be more motivated if they had more successes in learning.
- The things that some students need in order to learn are usually helpful to all students.
- Teachers teach students. Good students learn the subject and learn how to learn.

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